

Patent Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A wheel upon which a tire may be mounted, said wheel comprising:
a base wheel skeleton including a rim, a hub and a plurality of spokes for connecting said rim to said hub, each of said spokes including at least two threaded holes adjacent said connection of said spokes to said rim;
at least two threaded holes being disposed generally around a periphery of said hub and being generally symmetrically spaced radially and angularly around the periphery of said hub;
a hub cap being attachable to said wheel on a first side of said wheel and including at least one mounting extension for attachment of said hub cap to said threaded holes disposed generally around said periphery of said hub; and
at least one skin element being attachable to said wheel and including at least one hole for attachment of one end of said skin element to one of said threaded holes adjacent said connection of said spokes to said rim, said skin element further including an extension disposable under a portion of said hub cap to facilitate retention of another end of said skin element by said hub cap,
wherein a surface of each of said spokes on said first side of said wheel remains exposed after attachment of said hub cap and said skin element.
2. A wheel according to claim 1, each of said spokes including at least one longitudinally extending rib on a surface thereof, said surface of said spoke being disposed on the same side as said first side of said wheel.
3. A wheel according to claim 1, said hub cap including at least two edges contiguously engagable with at least two complementary edges of said skin element.
4. A wheel according to claim 1, said hub cap and said skin element being spaced from said wheel by means of spacers mountable between said respective holes in said hub cap and said skin element, and said threaded holes in said spokes and said hub.
5. A wheel upon which a tire may be mounted, said wheel comprising:

a base wheel skeleton including a rim, a hub and a plurality of spokes for connecting said rim to said hub, each of said spokes including at least two threaded holes adjacent said connection of said spokes to said rim;

at least two threaded holes being disposed generally around a periphery of said hub and being generally symmetrically spaced radially and angularly around the periphery of said hub;

a hub cap being attachable to said wheel on a first side of said wheel and including at least one mounting extension for attachment of said hub cap to said threaded holes disposed generally around said periphery of said hub; and

at least one skin element being attachable to said wheel and including at least one hole for attachment of one end of said skin element to one of said threaded holes adjacent said connection of said spokes to said rim, said skin element further including an extension for engagement with a respective indentation in said hub cap to facilitate retention of another end of said skin element by said hub cap,

wherein a surface of each of said spokes on said first side of said wheel is substantially covered by said skin element after attachment of said hub cap and said skin element.

6. A wheel according to claim 5, each of said spokes including at least one longitudinally extending rib on a surface thereof, said surface of said spoke being disposed on the same side as said first side of said wheel.

7. A method of changing the appearance of a wheel, said wheel including a base wheel skeleton including a rim, a hub and a plurality of spokes for connecting said rim to said hub, each of said spokes including at least two threaded holes adjacent said connection of said spokes to said rim, and at least two threaded holes being disposed generally around a periphery of said hub and being generally symmetrically spaced radially and angularly around the periphery of said hub, said method comprising:

mounting a hub cap to said wheel on a first side of the wheel, said hub cap including at least one mounting extension for attachment of said hub cap to said threaded holes disposed generally around said periphery of said hub; and

mounting at least one skin element to said wheel, said skin element including at least one hole for attachment of one end of said skin element to one of said threaded holes adjacent said

connection of said spokes to said rim, said skin element further including an extension for engagement with a portion of said hub cap to facilitate retention of another end of said skin element by said hub cap.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein a surface of each of said spokes on said first side of said wheel remains exposed after attachment of said hub cap and said skin element.

9. A method according to claim 7, wherein a surface of each of said spokes on said first side of said wheel is substantially covered by said skin element after attachment of said hub cap and said skin element.

10. A method according to claim 7, each of said spokes including at least one longitudinally extending rib on a surface thereof, said surface of said spoke being disposed on the same side as said first side of said wheel.

11. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
contiguously engaging at least two edges of said hub cap with at least two complementary edges of said skin element.

12. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
spacing said hub cap and said skin element from said wheel by means of spacers mountable between said respective holes in said hub cap and said skin element, and said threaded holes in said spokes and said hub.